



Walking the Woods

Fall 2008

Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve

Upcoming Educational Programs & Events

Mark your calendars now to attend these First Saturday programs:

"Become a Beaver"

Saturday, November 1, 2008 10:00-11:00am

How is it that beavers do what they do so well? Come find out how a beaver's amazing adaptations allow it to live in the aquatic world with naturalist, Curtis Dykstra. During this interactive and humorous program for all ages, one lucky person will actually get transformed into a beaver!



"Winter Bird Hike"

Saturday, December 6, 2008 10:00 -11:00am

Ecosystem Preserve volunteer and expert birder, Bill Sweetman, will take guests on a birding adventure to look for winter birds and listen for their distinct calls. A great program for families with children ages 8 and up. Bring binoculars if you own a pair and dress for the weather! Enrollment is limited to 25 people. To register please call 616-526-7601 or email preserve@calvin.edu.



Please help us save some trees.
We are starting to email the newsletter via pdf. If you would like to receive it by email before everyone else receives it in the mail email us at preserve@calvin.edu with your name and email address.

Inside

Critter Corner: American Goldfinch.....	2
Unplugged: Nature Clubs.....	2
Becoming Green: Local Farmer's Markets:	3
Highlight a Preserve Worker: Nicole Roelofs.....	3
Volunteer Opportunities.....	3
November Woods: Poem and Photos.....	4

Hours

Bunker Interpretive Center

Monday—Friday 9 am to 5 pm

Saturday 10 am to 4 pm

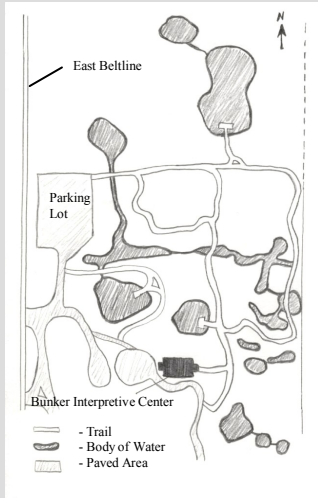
(school year only)

Closed Sunday

Trails

Open Daily

Dawn –Dusk



Editor

Nicole Roelofs
Program Assistant

Design

Jeanette Henderson
Program Manager

Director

Randy Van Dragt

Calvin College
Ecosystem Preserve

1750 Beltline
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
(616) 526-7601

preserve@calvin.edu
www.calvin.edu/academic/eco-preserve

Walking the Woods is published quarterly as an educational connection to Calvin staff and students, neighbors, volunteers, and friends who support the Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve with their involvement and care.

Critter Corner

American Goldfinch

Carduelis tristis

Range: The goldfinch can be found year round in Michigan. It will migrate anywhere from Southern Canada to Mexico during the changing seasons.

Habitat: Weedy areas like fields, meadows, orchards and gardens.

Diet: Mainly consists of seeds, grains, berries, and the occasional insect. Prefers the thistle seed.



Interesting winter fact: Goldfinches are the only finch that undergoes a complete molt. Male finches will display a stunning yellow color in the summer, but turn olive green in the winter. Females are a dull-yellow brown that brightens slightly in the summer.

Unplugged: Connecting Children with Nature

The purpose of this column is to provide you with some small ways you can get the children you know outdoors and enjoying God's creation.

Do you feel that since school has started, every hour in the family schedule is filled with school, practices, and meetings? Not much time is left to escape from those hectic days, so communities around the country are starting nature clubs, and many have proved to be very successful. A nature club is designed to give families an opportunity once a week to spend time connecting with nature together. Each week, the club is encouraged to seek out a new destination and to incorporate new activities in order to give children a variety of natural experiences.

If you are interested in starting a nature club in your community, visit this website and check out others that have been very successful:

www.childrenandnature.org/natureclubs.

Ecosystem Preserve Hike Recipe

Family & Friends
Mosquito Repellent
Trail Map (Pick up in the BIC)
Appropriate Outerwear
Good shoes
Camera
Adventurous Spirit

Spend a few hours one week.
Combine all ingredients.



Visit the Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve for a great adventure.

Becoming Green: Small Ways You Can Make a Difference

Local Farmer's Markets

It is the fall season in Michigan and that means apple picking in local orchards, strolling the farmer's market for pumpkins, gourds, and fall decorations for your home, and the smell of warm apple pie after a walk on a cold, brisk day. Purchasing locally benefits everyone by offering highly nutritious produce, a chance to meet area farmers and support the local economy financially.

Grand Rapids and most towns in the surrounding West Michigan area offer a slew of fantastic farmer's markets and orchards where all your fall decorating, baking, and entertainment needs will be fulfilled in a way that supports the local businesses.

- Fulton Street Market in Grand Rapids is one of the largest markets in the area offering not only the freshest fruits and vegetables but also seasonal flowers and decorations, baked goods, cheese, and meat. It is open May through Christmas. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 8am-4pm. Visit www.fultonstreetmarket.org.
- Subscribe to West Michigan's newest magazine "foodforthought" to find a market closest to you, receive updates on local events, and bake some fantastic seasonal recipes using local ingredients.

Kale Potato Soup

Created by Jeanette Henderson

- 2 cloves of garlic peeled and minced
- 1 small onion peeled and diced
- Olive oil
- A large bunch of kale washed and chopped in to bite size pieces
- A bunch of small potatoes washed and diced into bite sized chunks.
- 8 cups of chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 package of Italian sausage cooked and crumbed in to bite sized pieces (optional)
- 1 cup of cream or half & half (optional)
- Salt and pepper as desired

In a large pot, coat the surface with olive oil and cook the garlic and onions until soft. Add the chicken broth, kale, and potatoes. Bring the mixture to a boil and then simmer until potatoes and kale are tender. Add the sausage and cream if desired. Add salt and pepper as desired. Serve with a crusty bread and a salad.

Volunteer Opportunities

You do not have to be a student or faculty member at Calvin College to get involved with activities at the Ecosystem Preserve. In fact, we are blessed with volunteers from the community who assist us with anything from pulling invasive species to helping with crafts at summer camp. For more information on how your gifts and talents may contribute to the mission of the preserve, please contact Jeanette Henderson, Program Manager, at 616-526-7601 or via email at preserve@calvin.edu.

Volunteer opportunities include...

- Creating interpretive displays
- Assisting with summer camps
- Helping plant native species
- Maintaining trails
- Assisting with invasive species control
- Leading interpretive programs
- Monitoring species
- Assisting with special events such as the Native Plant Sale
- Helping coordinate volunteers



Get to know Nicole Roelofs

- One of the new program assistants
- Nicole started working at the BIC as a summer camp leader this summer and enjoyed the experience enough to continue working as a program assistant.
- She is a junior at Calvin College, majoring in environmental science, and she hopes to design LEED certified buildings.
- Her favorite time of year on the preserve is the fall, when the trees are ablaze with color.
- She also loves meeting the families and young students who use the ecosystem preserve for leisure activities or school programs.



November Woods

The November woods whispers in warm sunshine.
Call of chickadee punctuates the stillness.
Man-made roar smudges the natural sounds.
Airplane buzz, traffic hum, machinery
So noisy against autumn silence.

People rush about seeking purpose
Yet nature waits in hushed anticipation
Be still . . . Know that I am God.
The trees know how to be still.
The sparrow knows how to wait.
How can I still my own soul to listen?

~ Cheryl Hoogewind
Preserve Manager 1998 to 2007



Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve and Bunker Interpretive Center
1750 East Belline Ave SE
Grand Rapids MI 49546-5949

MINDS IN THE MAKING

CALVIN

